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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/553,168	01/03/2006	Fabio Veroni	2789-62	7759
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ROMAN, LUIS ENRIQUE				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/553,168

Applicant(s)

VERONI, FABIO

Examiner

LUIS ROMAN

Art Unit

2836

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 November 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 and 15-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12-14 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/11/05

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant amendment filed on 11/21/07 has been entered. Accordingly claims 1-26 have been amended and no claims have been kept original, cancelled or added new.

The IDS form has been completed with the initials previously missing as required by applicant.

The abstract and specification has been amended. It also included remarks/arguments.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 9-11 & 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5369542).

Regarding claims 1 Fowler et al. discloses a programmable control unit (Fig. 1) comprising: a switch to be arranged in said electrical circuit (200); a microprocessor to with a programmable threshold (130, note that microprocessors have memory to perform the logic operations/comparisons and this one in particular outputs a triggering signal, which will result in an integrated triggering device, as a result of the logic operations/comparisons, see Abstract), a current detector for detecting a current level (250) and causing the switch to break the circuit if the flowing current in the circuit exceeds a predetermined rated current for more than a specified duration (Col. 1 lines 27-37) but does not specifically discloses having two separate current detectors.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have one current detector and operate accordingly to overcurrent situations involving different levels of current and respective time durations or to have two current detectors which operate separately according to two different overcurrent situations. Additionally, Fowler et al. discloses the claimed invention except for having two detectors to ultimately operate the same switch. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skills in the art at the time the invention was made to have two detectors one for current and other for thermal consideration during a period of time (note that is also related to the current), since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skills in the art and has no patentable significance unless a new and unexpected result is produced. In re Harza, 274 F.2d 669 USPQ 378 (CCPA 1960).

Regarding claims 9-11 Fowler et al. further teaches a programmable control unit that protects against overcurrents (Abstract & Fig. 2), the specified duration can be programmed to depend on the detected level of current in the electric circuit (Abstract), microprocessor have memory to perform logic operations/comparisons .

Regarding claims 17-19 Fowler et al. further teaches receiving commands and operating the switch and communicating devices of a network thru a media cable (Col.1 lines 16-26 & Fig. 4, note that the electrical connection between button and dial with the circuitry is accomplished thru an electrical conductor or cable).

Claims 2, 4 & 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5369542) in view of Larson (US 5966281).

Regarding claim 2 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim 1 but does not specifically disclose a second current detector having a thermal current level detection element and causing the switch to break if the thermal current level detected exceeds a temperature threshold.

Larson et al. teaches a circuit breaker with plural detectors including a thermal current level detector that breaks the circuit when a threshold is exceeded (Col. 3 line53 to Col. 4 line 9 & Fig. element 26).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the circuit of Fowler et al. with the circuit breaker with thermal sensing unit of Larson because it provides a thermal protection.

Regarding claim 4 Larson et al teaches the plural current detectors being a combination of thermal and electromagnetic current level detections (Fig.).

Regarding claim 6 Fowler et al. (US 5369542) in view of Larson discloses the claimed invention except for that the triggering device, the second current detector and the switch are integrated into a single unit. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to integrate the three elements in one unit, since it has been held that forming in one piece an article which has formerly been formed in two pieces and put together involves only routine skill in the art. Howard v. Detroit Stove Works, 150 U.S. 164 (1893).

Claims 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5369542) in view of Leone et al. (US 5369542).

Regarding claim 3 Fowler et al. further discloses the circuit of claim 1 but does not specifically discloses a second current detector having an electromagnetic current level detection element including a coil and causing the switch to break if a magnetic force generated by the coil exceed a threshold.

Leone et al. teaches a circuit breaker with two detection coils (Abstract & Fig. 1)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the circuit of Fowler et al. with the circuit breaker of Leone et al. because provides protection to the circuit at two different current levels and this redundancy improves the safety of the device.

Claims 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5369542) in view of Larson (US 5966281) and Yamamoto Hiroshi (JP 07-312151).

Regarding claim 5 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim. 1 but does not disclose a second current detector is configured to cause the switch to break if the current exceeds a predetermined value and a solid state interruption element in series with the switch.

Larson et al. teaches a circuit breaker with plural detectors including a thermal current level detector that breaks the circuit when a threshold is exceeded (Col. 3 line53 to Col. 4 line 9 & Fig. element 26).

Yamamoto Hiroshi teaches a circuit breaker with a solid state interruption element in series with the switch (Fig. 1 elements 2U, 8U).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Fowler et al. with the circuit breaker with thermal sensing unit of Larson because it provides a thermal protection and further with the teachings of Yamamoto Hiroshi because interrupts unexpected current in less than 1 cycle once detected by current-limiting reactor. Does not need to rise short circuit current interruption capacitance of circuit breaker in receiving point due to short circuit impedance of unexpected current (Abstract).

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5369542) in view of Covi et al. (US 6515840).

Regarding claim 7 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim 1 but does not disclose wherein the first current detector comprises a means to convert the electrical current flowing in the circuit into a voltage and means for detecting the voltage and outputting a corresponding current level detection signal.

Covi et al. teaches a circuit breaker with a sensing resistor and a comparator (Fig. 3 elements RS, 20).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Fowler et al. circuit with the teachings of Covi et al. because operational amplifiers provide accurate comparison, amplify the signal drive other elements and consume low power.

Claims 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5369542), Covi et al. (US 6515840) and W.F. Skeats (US 2310126).

Regarding claim 8 Fowler et al. in view of Covi et al. discloses the circuit of claim 1 but does not disclose wherein the means for converting an electrical current into a voltage comprises a shunt impedance or an arrangement of coils magnetically coupled to constitute a transformer or a hall effect device or a magnetoresistor or a Rogosky coil.

W.F. Skeats teaches a circuit breaker with shunt impedance (Fig. 2 element 12).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Fowler et al. in view of Covi et al. circuit with the teachings of W.F. Skeats because it is desirable to have current and voltage measurement records in precise and accurate time relation with respect to each other in other words without distortion.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5710691) in view of Sato Eietsu et al. (FR 2751784).

Regarding claim 15 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim 9 but does not specifically disclose wherein the processing means is adapted to provide a plurality of functional relations each specifying for a plurality of current levels a respective associated duration; and select one of the functional relations in accordance with the current threshold command.

Sato Eietsu et al. teaches a switching adjustment method for circuit breakers wherein the processing means is adapted to provide a plurality of functional relations

each specifying for a plurality of current levels a respective associated duration; and select one of the functional relations in accordance with the current threshold command (Fig. 7).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Fowler et al. circuit with the teachings of Sato Eietsu et al. because it removes the possibility of an operator wrongly adjusting the circuit breaker.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5710691), Sato Eietsu et al. (FR 2751784) and Hartmann et al. (US 5359711).

Regarding claim 16 Fowler et al. in view of Sato Eietsu et al. discloses the circuit of claim 15 but does not specifically discloses the use of tables.

Hartmann et al. teaches a system with circuit breakers that uses tables (Col. 2 line 56 to Col. 3 line 5).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Fowler et al. in view of Sato Eietsu et al. circuit with the teachings of Hartmann et al. because provides easy customization.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5710691) in view of B.B. Purdy et al. (US 2839092) and Baker (US Patent Application Publication 2002/0135237).

Regarding claim 20 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim 1 and a switch and a coil for electro magnetically driving a movable member but does not disclose wherein the first means comprises an auxiliary switch connected in series with the coil; the switch and the auxiliary switch being mechanically coupled with the movable member for actuation thereby; a displacement required for opening the auxiliary switch being larger than a displacement required for opening the switch.

B.B. Purdy et al. teaches a circuit that uses a switch with multiple poles and a single throw wherein an auxiliary switch connected in series with the coil (Fig. 6 element 43).

Baker teaches a switch with multiple poles and single throw wherein the displacement of the contacts is different (Fig. 3).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Fowler et al. circuit the teachings of B.B. Purdy et al. because it allows to drive multiple switches with only one coil and further in view of Baker because this prolongs the life of the switching activated devices.

Claims 21-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5710691) in view of Gilker (US 4514685).

Regarding claims 21 & 22 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim 1 but does not disclose that is in an electricity meter for measuring the amount of energy supplied to an electricity consumer through an electric circuit.

Gilker teaches an electricity meter (Abstract).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Fowler et al. circuit with the teachings of Gilker because it generates accurate signals of the measurements (Col. 1 line 65 to Col. 2 line2).

Gilker further teaches a circuit for obtaining a measure for the instantaneous active and reactive power levels supplied to the electric circuit; and integrating the obtained instantaneous power levels over time in order to obtain the active and reactive energy supplied to the electrical circuit (Fig. 4).

Claims 23-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (US 5710691) in view of Berkman et al. (US 7064654).

Regarding claim 23 Fowler et al. discloses the circuit of claim 1 but does not disclose the use of it in an electricity distribution network, comprising at least one

electrical power plant for generating electrical power to be distributed to a plurality of consumers; an electrical power distribution network for distributing the power generated by said at least one power plant to said consumers.

Berkman et al. teaches an electric network to provide electrical power to a plurality of consumers (Abstract).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Fowler et al. circuit with the teachings of Berkman et al. because the combination allows an electricity distribution network to measure the consumption of each customer.

Regarding claim 24 Fowler et al. disclose command signals to operate the breaker (Fig. 1 signals between elements 130 & 200).

Regarding claim 25 Berkman et al. further teaches a network with high, medium and low voltages and substations (Fig. 2) and communications thru a twisted pair (Fig. 6c) and Bolda et al. teaches command signals (Fig. 2 elements 83a-d).

Regarding claim 26 Berkman et al. further teaches the communications in the electric network being wireless (Fig. 16).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 12-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-26 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: Millburn et al. (US 6853274) & Kato (US 5231365).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Luis E. Román whose telephone number is (571) 272-5527. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon – Fri from 7:15 AM to 3:45 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Sherry can be reached on (571) 272-2084. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for unpublished applications is available through private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866) 217-9197 (toll-free).

/Michael J Sherry/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2836

LR/030108

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Examiner, Art Unit 2836

